



Kathleen Clarke  
Assistant Commissioner

# Grazing Improvement



Bill Hopkin  
Director

Kathleen Clarke joined the UDAF Team in April of 2007 and is serving as Assistant Commissioner. She is responsible for overseeing the conservation programs at the Department and will be the key contact for interagency partnerships and programs that focus on enhancing the health and productivity of Utah's public and private lands.

Kathleen will be working to expand watershed and range restoration programs, and to develop and promote grazing practices that are both profitable for ranchers and good for the land. She will also work with the Executive Team at UDAF to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the role agriculture plays in our "quality of life" in Utah, both for the production of food and fiber but also in the stewardship of Utah's priceless lands and natural resources. Kathleen will coordinate the development of the UDAF Strategic Plan, and will interface with UDAF external partners including the Public Land Policy Council, the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development, USU Extension, and the Utah Association of Counties.

GIP is a broad-based program designed to improve range conditions and thereby improve Utah's livestock industry.

The program is directed by Bill Hopkin, a lifelong rancher and former manager of one of the state's largest cattle ranches. In addition to Bill, a staff of Range Specialists located in five regions throughout the state will offer the livestock industry sound information regarding grazing issues. The program also gives ranchers the opportunity to participate in rangeland decision making through five regional advisory boards and a State Grazing Advisory Board.

The five regions and their coordinators are as follows: Northeast, Troy Forrest, (435) 257-5403; Northeast, Jim Brown, (435) 722-5783; Central, Tom Tippetts, (435) 283-4441; Southwest, Randy Marshall, (435) 438-5092; Southeast, Dave Cook, (801) 538-4852.

Key accomplishments made during the past 12 months:

- Regional and statewide advisory boards were established where local producers help guide the program's direction.
- GIP approved approximately \$1 million to spend on projects designed to increase livestock water supplies, improve grass species that benefit livestock and wildlife grazing, and combat forage-damaging insects.

As one of the 15 members of the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development (UPCD), the UDAF is investing more than \$2 million to reseed and rehabilitate rangeland damaged in the state's largest single wildfire—the Millford Flat Fire in Beaver and Millard Counties.

"We are declaring war on cheat grass and other invasive species," said Commissioner Blackham. GIP will focus its resources on creating healthy landscapes that can help prevent catastrophic fires and serve the needs of the communities.

## GIP's three major components

### GIP

- ◆ **Strengthen Utah's livestock industry**
- ◆ **Improve rural economies**
- ◆ **Enhance the environment**

1. Expand the authority and ability of regional and state grazing boards to impact federal management plans and current rangeland issues. Input from the boards, USU extension and research by the staff will formulate suggestions to the Governor's Office for official state positions on grazing issues for federal

and state agencies.

2. Through a coordinated effort, GIP will expand the number of projects that rehabilitate our natural resources, increase productivity and protect the landscape for all Utahns.

3. A revision of NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act). Work for a process that continues to make land management discussions that are "open" but are more reasonable, affordable and effective in addressing the impacts of invasive species and productive capacity of rangeland and watersheds.



The fenceline above separates an area of livestock grazed rangeland (right) from ungrazed on the left. The grasses on the right are healthier and more plentiful. They are also more fire resistant and help retain more water in underground aquifers.